

## Code of Conduct for Youth Employees and Volunteers Who Interact with Children, Other Youth, or Vulnerable Adults

You are about to begin what could become a lifelong commitment to working or volunteering in the Church. It is a privilege to help carry on the mission of Jesus – a mission that no one takes lightly. As a minor, it is important that you understand and follow certain rules and guidelines, both for your own protection and for the protection of those to whom you minister. The Church takes the issue of misconduct very seriously. Any instance of misconduct will be evaluated carefully and you are urged to report misconduct that you see to your adult supervisor. Likewise, your own conduct must be beyond question. You have been entrusted with a responsible position and are expected to “Let your light so shine before all, that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven” (Matt 5:16).

To ensure the safety of children, youth, and vulnerable adults in the Archdiocese of Saint Paul and Minneapolis, all minors who wish to be employed or wish to volunteer to interact with children, other youth or vulnerable adults at a parish and/or school and their parent/guardian must review and sign this Code of Conduct. In addition to this *Code of Conduct (Code)*, youth will also be required to fulfill “Essential 3 Guidelines for Minor Youth” involving background evaluations (two written references) and safe environment training.

Please note that for the purposes of this *Code* the words “minor” and “youth” are used interchangeably and describe a person who has not reached the age of 18. The words “vulnerable adults” denotes persons with physical, mental, or emotional conditions that render them unable to defend or protect themselves.

***This Code applies to youth conduct as it relates to their role interaction with minors or vulnerable adults on behalf of the Church.***

While working as a youth employee or volunteer, **I will:**

- Protect and guide children and other youth (minors) and vulnerable adults entrusted to my care at all times.
- Treat everyone with patience, courtesy, respect, and dignity.
- Be positive, supportive, and caring in my speech and interactions with minors and vulnerable adults.
- Use positive words and encouragement to change behavior and encourage others to do likewise.
- Maintain appropriate physical and emotional boundaries with minors and vulnerable adults. Examples of permissible physical contact include:
  - Brief side hugs or an arm around the shoulder
  - Hand-shakes or “high fives”
  - Holding hands while walking with young children or those who are unsteady
  - Brief pat on the shoulder/upper back
  - Holding hands during prayer
  - Brief touching of hand, head, shoulder, or arm
- Always be in the presence of an adult when interacting with minors or vulnerable adult. This means that an adult should be nearby to see and hear what I am doing and help me if I need assistance.
- Promptly report to my supervisor any inappropriate or bullying behavior.
- Promptly report suspected abuse to my supervisor or if it involves my supervisor, report the incident to the next person in a supervisory role, such as a principal or pastor.



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